

7

Cooktown

28. 3. 99.

My dear Spencer.

Our letters must have crossed! Yes. I was beginning to think that it was a jolly long time since I had heard from you, but this is quite explicable when you tell me that you have paid a visit to the dear old Country. How I envy you!

With regard to the Oxford vacancy, I can well understand your preferring Melbourne - without a doubt there is far more intellectual freedom and scope for good scientific work out here. I do trust that dear old Bourne will get it - there is none of that "teach-your-grandmother-to-suck-eggs"-style about

him - a weakness which, as you well know, <sup>was</sup> ~~was~~ always in evidence with Hickey, Poulton etc. I am surprised that E.R. in supporting Weldon - I thought he would have worked hammer and tongs for Bourne. On the other hand, it may be a case of "Save me from my friends", and his advocacy of the former may turn out to the latter's advantage.

What about little Hatchett Jackson? - surely his merits are not going to pass unrewarded, or perhaps he has not sufficient go and push about him.

No, I have never had the pleasure of meeting Hower, though I have often heard of him, and always spoken kindly of. You. I would dearly love

to see the old laboratory again - William I suppose is still growing for a nice in salary! Good old Waggett - he was a rum chap, but always had a good heart.

You - very many thanks <sup>it is excellent in every respect</sup> indeed again for your book. I suppose you saw the Queensland review - I do not know who wrote it, but if written in Brisbane the only person capable of it would I think be Shirley (a London B.Sc.) and one of the Senior School Inspectors. I have been away from Cooktown some little time, so that so far I have not seen its mention in the Bulletin or ~~Queensland~~ Australasian.

By the by, with the assistance of the Lutheran Missionaries, I have

I am leaving to-day to distribute some presents for the Coastal Aborigines who rendered assistance to the ship-wrecked crew during the late gale.

just completed the grammar of the Cooktown language (on identical lines as the Boulia District one), and this time have written it all with the proper spelling - that authorized by the R. Geographical Society.

Now this is strictly private, and I would like your advice. I want dearly to come down to Melbourne for the Assoc<sup>n</sup> meeting, but official tape might stop me (in refusing leave of absence for that purpose). The only certainty I would have would be to ~~represent~~ come as representative of the Queensland Government - but how is this to be worked? Would it be possible for you to apply officially for my presence?

Always sincerely yours  
Walter Roth.

If Bourne should get Oxford, please let me know, as I should like to congratulate him.